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UNDER SAILING ORDERS

A COMEDY
IN ONE ACT

BY

HELEN P. KANE

DICK & FITZGERALD
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BY

HELEN P. KANE

Author of "White Dove of Oneida," "Upsetting of Jabez Strong," "Future Lady Holland," "Peregrinations of Polly," "Bundle of Matches," etc.

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UNDER SAILING ORDERS

CHARACTERS

RAYMOND ALLING.....*Yachtsman formerly Yale man*
ANTONIA WAYNE..*Engaged to P. Churchill, formerly betrothed to Alling*

TIME—The present. SCENE—A yacht cabin.

TIME OF PLAYING—Fifty minutes.

COSTUMES

ALLING. White yachting suit.

ANTONIA. White yachting suit, wearing hat and coat at first entrance. Scene II. Same suit, with scarf, also wears engagement ring.

INCIDENTAL PROPERTIES

Letter, writing material, cheque book, tray with cigar ashes, glasses, books, cushions, rugs, two ring-boxes and two rings, tray with sweetmeats and two small cups of coffee.

STAGE DIRECTIONS

As seen by a performer on the stage facing the audience, R., means right hand; L., left hand; C., center of stage; L. C., left of center; R. E., right entrance; L. E., left entrance; UP, toward back of stage; DOWN, toward footlights.

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UNDER SAILING ORDERS

SCENE I.

SCENE. *Cabin of the "Lorelei," luxuriously furnished with Turkish effect in couches, cushions and rugs. Table* L. C. *with arm-chair either side. Books on shelf,* R. *Entrance from deck down* R. *Desk* L. *Entrance to stateroom down* L. *with portiere. Port with curtains, center back. Swinging lights. Wine glasses on table, and tray with cigar ashes.*

ENTER ALLING R. E., *goes to desk, opens it, sits and writes busily. Reads over letter, nods.*

ALLING. I *think* that's all right. (*Takes cheque book from pocket, fills in cheque, looks at it and laughs*) Cheeky! But then so is the whole business! (*Folds and puts letter in envelope, addresses, seals, and puts in his pocket. Closes desk, glances about, straightens cushions on couches, picks up tray of cigar ashes and throws contents out through port back. Piles wine glasses carelessly on tray and takes it down* R.) Steward!

STEWARD (*off stage*). Aye, aye, sir.

ALLING. Take these things. *Quick!* (*Looks round again*) Books? (*Goes to bookshelf and runs fingers over backs*) Hm! Not much there! "Pitchers and Batters" (*Takes it down*) Might do. She used to go to the Yale games. Confound it! There isn't a lady's book here! Why didn't I put in a few, just for the looks of the thing? Not even a "running brook" to find 'em in! Holy smoke! Here's *one!* (*Takes down Shakespeare*) The "Noblest Roman of them all!" (*Picks up "Pitchers" and balances the two*) He's a heavy weight. (*Drops "Pitchers" on table*) Let him stay. The other would have found use for him, and possibly I may. Now! (*Looks around again. Through all this scene he has worked in a sort of laughing excitement. Now, all at once, he frowns and looks very serious*) Suppose—(*Sits on chair, crossing arms on the back, and*

muses) Hm! Suppose it doesn't work, and Tony gets wrathy. Suppose when I get out to sea, I find I'm stuck on a mud bank! There's no way of telling what Tony will do! There never was! (*Nods slowly and emphatically*) *I* would just smash things—and say, "You go to—well, Thunder—or any other old place! (*Whistle heard outside.* ALLING *jumps up, overturning chair*) Bos'n's whistle! (*Rights chair, gives another glance about*)

(EXIT *quickly* R. E.

ALLING (*off stage*). Can't tell you how glad I am to welcome you on board the Lorelei! Mind that rope's end! Tom, you lazy rascal, didn't I tell you to clean ship before the ladies came aboard?

ANTONIA (*off stage*). It is beautifully clean.

ALLING (*off stage*). Glad you think so. Yachtsmen have their standards, you know, as well as housekeepers. You wouldn't have a fathom or so of rope lying round the entrance to your drawing-room.

ANTONIA (*off stage, laughing*). Well—no——

ENTER ALLING R. E., *followed by* ANTONIA.

ALLING. This is the cabin.

ANTONIA. Oh! What a *beautiful* room! And what luxury! Turkish rugs and cushions! And Indian brasses! Ray Alling—(*Stops suddenly, biting her lip*)

ALLING (*bowing deeply*). Thank you! (*Showing* L. E.) This room is at your disposal. Will you make yourself comfortable, while I give some orders? (*Going*)

ANTONIA (*recovering from a momentary chagrin*). Yes—certainly. Where shall I find Madam Lyon?

ALLING (*turning back*). Oh—I should have told you! I had a note from her just (*Looks at watch*) just fifteen minutes ago, to say that she was at the mercy of one of her sick headaches, and a yacht would be—she didn't *say* inferno, but it was its equivalant.

ANTONIA (*indignantly*). Why didn't you send me word?

ALLING (*reproachfully*). Fifteen minutes ago? This yacht carries only one boat, and that was ashore—for you.

ANTONIA. But the messenger?

ALLING. That small grandson of hers, on his way across Frenchman's Bay, with a fishing party. I *couldn't* ask him to walk back, you know.

ANTONIA (*excitedly*). You didn't, for one moment, think I would go without her, did you?

ALLING (*slowly*). That's as *you* say, you know. (*Looks out*) Good wind! Too bad to miss it!

ANTONIA. (*vexedly*). But think how it would look.

ALLING. Look jolly well, *I* think.

ANTONIA. Oh, *you*! But what would all those people at the St. Sauveur think?

ALLING (*thrusting hands in pockets and leaning against bulkhead*). Can't prove it by me! No clairvoyance in mine!

ANTONIA (*laughing in spite of herself*). Ray.

ALLING (*bowing with exaggeration*). Again thank you! The formality of the hotel nearly made me forget my own name. I am more than pleased to recall it!

ANTONIA. You're not one bit better than you used to be!

ALLING. Sad, but true! (*Pensively*) I've had no one to make me better. "Of all sad words of tongue or pen—"

ANTONIA (*interrupting*). You're incorrigible. You always were.

ALLING (*meekly*). Shall I order the yawl alongside again? (*Looking out*) *Such* a day for a run.

ANTONIA. Yes—no—I don't know—(*Sits at table, chin on hands*) I suppose (*Slowly*) it wouldn't be so very dreadful—if no one knew! And everyone at the St. Sauveur knew Madam Lyon was coming with me.

ALLING. It wasn't *your* fault if she didn't.

ANTONIA. And I *do* love a yacht.

ALLING (*meekly*). And I am only an accessory.

ANTONIA (*laughing again*). You! Accessory! You always made the others accessory to you.

ALLING (*carelessly*). All but Antonia Wayne! *She* wouldn't be "accessory." Do I order the yawl, or do I give sailing orders? Miss Wayne commands the Lorelei—and the Lorelei's owner. (*Bowing*)

ANTONIA (*gaily*). Thanks. Not I. It would be disastrous for the Lorelei. I am tempted to be reckless—and throw discretion to the winds——

ALLING. And waves? Do.

ANTONIA. Well——

ALLING (*melodramatically*). *'Tis* well!

(EXIT *quickly* R. E.

ANTONIA (*alone*). Not *very* well, I'm afraid. But the temptation was great. Tony Wayne, be honest, and put that in the

plural. Oh, well, it is only one day! I *might* have *one* day! (*Picks up "Pitchers and Batters" and carelessly turns the leaves. Grows absorbed, then laughs delightedly*) Don't I remember that game! The Yale boys cheered themselves hoarse, and then carried him home on their shoulders. They called themselves the "Alling-Nine" that day. (*Muses*) And it all began that night. (*Gives herself a little shake*) Well—that's past history. Not interesting to the present generation! (*Firmly*) And certainly not to *you,* Antonia Wayne, Churchill-to-be! (*Closes book decidedly, looks about, sees shelf and replaces book*) You stay there! *Mischief-maker!* (*Looks about cabin*) What extravagance! Unless he bought them in the East. Perhaps he did. Wonder if he has really been there? Not a sign of a picture. And those Indian girls make such alluring pictures and are so beguiling. (*Checks herself suddenly*) And it does not concern you in the least, Antonia Wayne, whether they have been—are—or will be—in this instance. (*GOES to* L. E.) This is at my disposal. (*Draws portiere*) If it isn't the dearest, daintiest little room! Seaweed effects, and mermaids to hold the lights and draw back the curtains! Didn't know he had so much poetry in him. (*Muses*) I wonder who had the "disposal" of it last? (*Defiantly*) Whoever you are, my dear, Oriental, or just plain United States, *I* am in possession to-day! (GOES *into stateroom, and returns presently without coat and hat. Laughs a little recklessly*) I have thrown down the gauntlet to fate! This one day is mine. Time enough to think of to-morrow when to-morrow comes.

ENTER ALLING R. E., *with tray of sweetmeats and coffee.*

ALLING. This is the poor modern substitute for the Arabian bread and salt. (*Puts it down on table, and draws chair out for* ANTONIA) Having eaten under my roof—and over my keel—you are safe as in your own house.

ANTONIA (*sitting at table*). What 'comfortable assurance! (*Takes sweetmeat*) They look delicious. What are they? Turkish sweetmeats to match your furnishings?

ALLING. Not much! I abhor them! They are too deadly sweet! (*Serving her with coffee*) And I abominate Turkish coffee! These are all plain United States—like 'em?

ANTONIA (*tasting trifles and coffee*). Delicious! And the coffee is nectar. I couldn't make better myself.

ALLING. I'll let you pass that on to the steward. He'll be elated.

ANTONIA. Not if he is French. He would bow and say, "Mademoiselle is of so fine a perception." And inside it would be, "Mademoiselle is of so great a conceit." (*Laughing merrily*)

ALLING. He's a Jap. Imported him myself. He'll see you and go you ten better on compliments every time.

ANTONIA. So you *have* been in the East?

ALLING. A little. More in Eastern waters. When a poor devil has no home ties, and hasn't the spur of wondering where his next meal is coming from, and isn't a genius——

ANTONIA (*laughing*). And has the "Wanderlust"—"Poor Devil"—I'm not responsible for quotations.

ALLING. Or for the originator.

ANTONIA (*demurely*). That is one of the few mercies Providence has vouchsafed me.

ALLING. Yes. (*Quoting*) "For all these mercies," I trust you are "*duly* thankful." If the others have all the same negative character, it is a little suggestive of the blessings of Nirvana. You must have changed materially since the days of the Yale games. (*slight pause*) I never knew a more positive young woman.

ANTONIA (*coolly*). Only less so than a very positive young man I wot of.

ALLING (*carelessly*). Negations couldn't be charged against either of us.

ANTONIA (*rising and crossing to port, looks out*). You were always so *sure*.

ALLING (*meditatively*). Sounds like old times. I thought you had forgotten them.

ANTONIA (*quickly and gaily*). I have. Like the dial, I "number only shining hours." Don't spoil to-day. I have been counting on counting this one.

ALLING. Your last day. That is, I mean—To-morrow will be your first.

ANTONIA (*dryly*). "Sufficient unto the day." To-morrow may take thought for the things of itself. (*Sits on couch*)

ALLING (*crossing to her, and speaking whimsically as he looks down at her*). "Sufficient to the day is the"—Churchill—thereof.

ANTONIA (*quietly*). Well?

ALLING. You lead me to infer that Churchill and evil are

synonymous. I'd hate to think that—for the sake of his future wife.

ANTONIA (*gaily*). Your inferences are your own! Also I cannot imagine what interest *you* could have in Peyton Churchill's future wife.

ALLING (*indifferently*). Altruistic entirely. Being unattached, one gets into the habit of abstract interests.

ANTONIA (*irrelevantly*). Why are we staying below? Let's go on deck!

ALLING. By all means. Shall I bring your hat? (*Goes to* L. E.)

ANTONIA. No. I love the wind in my hair.

ALLING. You may need a coat.

ANTONIA (*laughing*). Not I! (*Looking from port*) How deliciously dark the water looks.

ALLING (*going beside her and looking out*). Yes—(*Hesitating*) the wind is shifting. It's a bit dubious, that color. Hope it won't spoil your day. (*Walks with her to* R. E. *and waits for her to pass*)

ANTONIA (*gaily*). It can't, I don't mind rough weather. A smooth sea is monotony.

ALLING. And I never found you monotonous yet!

(EXEUNT *both* R. E.

CURTAIN.

SCENE II

SCENE. *Same as Scene I. Stage nearly dark.*

ENTER ANTONIA R. E., *running as if blown in by a strong wind, followed by* ALLING, *who fastens the door behind them, apparently with difficulty; goes quickly to port and tries fastenings.*

ANTONIA (*breathlessly unwinding scarf*). *What* a wind! And listen how it pours.

ALLING. Thought we should get a squall out of that cloud.

ANTONIA. How dark it is! (*Sits on couch and pins up her hair, which is hanging and dishevelled*)

ALLING (*going quickly about*). Wait until I make things fast, and you shall have light. (*Goes to switch and turns on lights*) There. You're not frightened?

ANTONIA (*turning suddenly*). Why. Is there danger?

ALLING. Reckon not. She's weathered plenty of storms. There's a nasty ledge makes out here——

ANTONIA (*looking from port*). I can't see a thing but driving rain and long whipping foam streaks. We're running in, aren't we?

ALLING (*emphatically*). We're running *out!* Did you think we could sail in the teeth of a gale like this? The only safe thing to do is to run before the wind.

ANTONIA (*excitedly*). And what time shall we get back?

ALLING (*aside, muttering*). *Never,* I *hope!* (*Briefly*) Can't say.

ANTONIA (*sits up suddenly*). "Can't *say?*" (*Bitterly*) I am paying dearly for my folly.

ALLING (*sitting beside her and speaking very quietly*). Not if I can help it.

ANTONIA. But think of the tongues.

ALLING. I'll send a wireless when the storm blows over.

ANTONIA. If only Madam Lyon had not chosen to-day for a headache.

ALLING (*abruptly*). Do you remember that night when the Yale crowd was caught down the Sound in just such a storm?

ANTONIA. *Do* I?

ALLING (*easily*). That was before—you know.

ANTONIA (*coldly*). Yes, as you say, "before"—Well?

ALLING (*leaning toward her*). Do you remember what we quarrelled about that evening?

ANTONIA (*rising and walking over to chair* R. *of table and leaning on the back*). We were always quarrelling. What is the use of bringing that up now?

ALLING (*whimsically*). To show the uselessness of it then.

ANTONIA (*disdainfully*). One generally sees the uselessness of quarrels—afterward.

ALLING. But, this was such a little thing.

ANTONIA (*in a toneless voice*). Most of them were.

ALLING (*leaning toward her, earnestly*). Then you *do* remember!

ANTONIA (*turning on him passionately*). Yes—I remember—I remember Anna Steele's fluffy light hair—and her blue eyes—and her pouting lips, and the way she looked up at you—and—Oh, yes, I remember. What is the use of remembering *such* things?

ALLING (*rising and crossing to her*). And when I came back, you would have nothing to say to me——

ANTONIA. What *should* I say? If you chose to amuse yourself in that fashion, what need to comment on it.

ALLING. You gave me no chance to explain.

ANTONIA. It was quite superfluous. I *saw*, I saw her head on your shoulder, and saw you bending over her. Then I looked away. (*Scornfully*) It did not interest me to watch the finale.

ALLING (*quietly*). Pity you hadn't. Do you remember the next day?

ANTONIA (*passionately*). Ray Alling, this is intolerable! (*Suddenly quiet*) Of what use are all these interesting reminiscences—if I may be permitted to inquire?

ALLING (*going on as if she had not spoken*). I called and asked to see you. The answer was that you were not "receiving." And you sent me—by the maid—a certain small packet. I wrote you letters. They were returned unopened. I met you elsewhere. You bowed coolly, and passed me by. Once only you spoke to me. One day on the campus, you met me with that same girl, and you smiled and said, "My congratulations."

ANTONIA (*very quiet*). Yes—Well?

ALLING. Well—I am going to tell you, Antonia Wayne, what you would not hear ten years ago.

ANTONIA (*indifferently, sitting in the chair on which she has been leaning*). Doesn't it seem to you that you are stretching somewhat the privileges of a host?

ALLING (*not heeding her*). You condemned me then, unheard. Now, circumstantial evidence is not legally conclusive. If you condemn me again, it will be with knowledge of the facts.

ANTONIA (*carelessly*). Go on—if it amuses you.

ALLING (*thrusts hands in his pockets and walks, then returns and stands before her*). Anna Steele flirted with every fellow she could get hold of. Flirting was the breath of life to her, and —one hates to say it, but it is a fact—when they wouldn't make love to her, she made love to them.

ANTONIA (*indifferently*). I really can see no reason for repeating what all Yale knew—ten years ago.

ALLING. I had managed to keep clear of her till that night——

ANTONIA (*satirically*). It was a sudden attraction, then?

ALLING (*moving and standing squarely before her*). I had left you sheltered as well as I could manage, and had helped some of the boys to rig up some sail-cloth to keep off a little of the wind and wet, and on my way back, she laid hold of me.

She was terribly frightened, apparently—and clung to me. Declared she should fall if I didn't hold her. "The wind took her breath away," and when she finally got me to put my arm about her to hold her up, she just laid her head back on my shoulder, and looked up in my face, and said, "Oh, Ray, you have the nicest strong arm."—And I dropped her. That's the part you missed. I was so mad to think of the way she fooled me, I didn't care! (*Pause.* ANTONIA *looks up at him quickly, then drops her eyes again and sits very still, her hands tightly clasping the arms of the chair*) Then I went back to you. And the day you met us on the campus, was the first time I had seen her since that night. She joined me as I went across, and began teasing me about being cross with her, "She didn't mean any harm!" and such stuff, and I was trying my best to shake her off—when the fates sent you across our track.

ANTONIA (*in a broken voice, putting out her hand*). Ray—(*Pause.* ALLING *bends over her, takes the hand in both his, and raises it to his lips*) I—I'm sorry——

ALLING (*still holding the hand*). Tony——

ANTONIA (*leaning her head back so that she looks up in his face*). Yes?

ALLING. Are you sorry for me or for yourself?

ANTONIA. For both, I think. But most for the girl who relied on that "circumstantial evidence."

ALLING (*bending nearer her*). Did she *care?*

ANTONIA. If she hadn't cared, would she have been so insanely jealous? If she could have laughed at it and said, "It's only fooling." But she couldn't laugh. She *raged!* Oh, Ray, I'm *sorry.* Sorry when it is too late.

ALLING (*quoting*). "While the lamp holds out to burn."

ANTONIA (*laughing*). You're not flattering. I know I am a "vile sinner," but I see no possibility of a "return."

ALLING (*quoting*). "While there's life there's hope." You see my early education was along primitive lines.

ANTONIA (*raising her left hand to show ring*). Peyton Churchill comes to-morrow.

ALLING. Tell me, Tony, if Churchill hadn't butted in, in this unseemly fashion——

ANTONIA. But he *has.* It's no use!

ALLING. But, just supposing. (*Takes chair on the other side of the table*) Suppose I had been drifting about the world—as I have—and just succeeded in getting a hearing in the case—and the counsel had convinced the jury. Would the

judge award damages to the plaintiff, if Churchill hadn't butted in?

ANTONIA (*laughing and hesitating*). Well—possibly——

ALLING. And the plaintiff would pay said damages——

ANTONIA. But if she *couldn't,* you know——

ALLING (*rising*). But I *don't* know. "There's many a slip" —more early education.

ANTONIA (*sitting up very straight*). You don't think I would be so dishonorable as to throw him over? With my wedding gown in my trunk.

ALLING (*beaming*). *Is* it? I am *delighted.* (*Stands with hands in his pockets*)

ANTONIA (*puzzled*). Delighted. *You!* I thought——

ALLING (*smiling broadly*). Such an apropos bit of forethought on your part. I hope it is soft white silk, not that horrid stiff satin.

ANTONIA (*bewildered*). It *is* silk—but———

ALLING. Was that Churchill's idea, or yours?

ANTONIA. Mine. He wanted satin.

ALLING. All the better. Indulge him. Let him have satin, by all means. (*Laughs recklessly*)

ANTONIA (*utterly mystified*). But, I am going to be married in that silk.

ALLING. Oh, *that's* another matter.

ANTONIA (*rising and coming round to him*). *Will* you tell me, Ray, why you are talking all this hilarious nonsense about my wedding gown?

ALLING (*putting his arm about her*). Because I have a personal interest in it.

ANTONIA (*slipping out of his arm*). You're excused this once, Ray, for the sake of old times, but I have no right— (*Lays her hand on his breast*) Don't you see, it wouldn't be fair. (ALLING *catches her hand in both his. She suddenly lays her head on the clasped hands and stands perfectly still, then breaks into passionate weeping*) I would, Ray, I would. (*Sobbing*) But, I have given my word!

ALLING. I had first innings on that score! *Aside*) And mean to keep them.

ANTONIA (*face still hidden*). But, I took it back.

ALLING. Not legal! I didn't receive it. (*Lifts her head, and looks into her eyes, then gravely leads her to couch, and piles cushions behind her*) There, is that quite to your liking?

ANTONIA. Exactly.

ALLING. Then, let's consider the matter.

ANTONIA. But, Ray, there is nothing to consider. I am bound.

ALLING. Under a misapprehension! (*With mock gravity*) If I understand you aright, Miss Wayne, if certain facts connected with the plaintiff had come to your knowledge before a certain Churchill made a subsequent proposition, that proposition would not have been entertained by you—nor the proposer.—Am I right?

ANTONIA (*laughing*). Is this a quiz?

ALLING (*with ponderous solemnity*). Witness—not being put under oath—takes advantage of that fact to evade question number one. Kindly state the motive urged for this later contract.

ANTONIA. Ray, you are absurd. If you really want to know—he was lonely—and so was I—and——

ALLING. And so am I. And, as Churchill butted in where I had staked my claim long before, I made up my mind—if I could prove my claim—to hold it!

ANTONIA (*demurely*). I being "It?"

ALLING. Exactly. And, having proven it—(*Holds out his hands*) *Tony.*

ANTONIA (*appealingly*). Don't Ray. I told you I have given my word.

ALLING (*rising and standing before her*). For which reason this yacht is steering, as fast as the squall will let her, for the Mediterranean.

ANTONIA (*springing to her feet*). To the *Mediterranean!*

ALLING. And I have a parson chap aboard, who can make the trip a perfectly proper elopement.

ANTONIA (*furiously*). *Elopement! Abduction!* Ray Alling, are you crazy? Or do you think I am?

ALLING (*quietly*). I hope neither. And if you will put on that white silk gown, I'll put on a perfectly new evening suit—ordered for the occasion——

ANTONIA (*still furious*). You seem to have "ordered" everything! Will you kindly tell me how I am to carry out your program—with my trunk at the St. Sauveur, and I steering toward the Mediterranean?

ALLING (*smiling*). You will find your trunk in your room. It was brought in after we went out on deck. (ANTONIA *walks swiftly to* L. E. *and swings aside portiere, then leans helplessly against the doorway, looking at* ALLING. ALLING *holding out his hands*) Tony!

ANTONIA. How did you get it?

ALLING. The yawl went back for it, with a letter explaining that you had decided to make a cruise.

ANTONIA. And who——?

ALLING. The housekeeper attended to it. (*Coming over and standing before her*) It *was* a high-minded proceeding, Tony, I admit it.

ANTONIA. *Think* of the tongues! And poor Churchill!

ALLING. It was "poor Churchill" who drove me to it. I really did not plan the abduction (*Pauses*) until I heard that Churchill was coming to-morrow, and that you were to be married at once. It was my one chance, and I took it!

ANTONIA. And *me!* (*Still angrily*) Whether I would or no.

ALLING. Not quite. We can go back. Madam Lyon will not announce our marriage until to-morrow.

ANTONIA. *Announce our marriage!* You had a confederate, then. And the headache was part of the confederacy?

ALLING. Couldn't have done it half so well without that dear old lady. I told her my tale of woe—and she's a "Mother in Israel," Tony—whatever that may be.

ANTONIA (*dryly*). So it seems, for you.

ALLING. She hired your maid—I forgot to tell you you have a maid aboard. And the parson chap was an old friend, visiting her, and she convinced him that a yachting trip to the Mediterranean would be the best thing in the world for him. We didn't tell him, you see.

ANTONIA (*ironically*). How considerate! I am quite prepared to hear that she settled my hotel bill and tipped my waiter.

ALLING. Don't let that bother you. I—(*Checks himself suddenly*)

ANTONIA (*scandalized*). *You! You* paid *my* hotel bill?

ALLING. That was a slip—I didn't mean to tell you. Still, since I meant to assume all your bills—and since you were here——

ANTONIA (*exasperated*). Oh, go on.

ALLING. There was no reason, you know, why I should not accommodate you, if you hadn't your cheque book aboard—(ANTONIA *stands leaning with folded arms against the portiere, her eyes cast down*) Tony—(*She does not speak or move*) Tony—(*Very low*) Are you going back—to Churchill?

ANTONIA (*without raising her eyes*). You have made that impossible.

ALLING (*eagerly*). No—no! You are wrong! You intended to make a cruise and sent for your trunk, but the storm put you out of humor with yachting, and you gave it up. There were to be other ladies aboard—comment is impossible—even from Churchill.

ANTONIA (*scornfully*). How well you know Peyton Churchill —and me.

ALLING (*earnestly*). Tony. You *can't* think I would risk a *scandal!* I may be a brute, but not that kind. We covered every point. There could never be a word of comment.

ANTONIA (*dryly*). Except, possibly, from the man who looked for a bride—and found none. Also *possibly* from the woman who "*eloped!*" (ALLING *sits suddenly in chair* L. *of table and stares at* ANTONIA. *She still stands against the portiere, in the same attitude, except that her hands are lightly clasped before her. She does not look at him, and her face and tone are both expressionless. Pause*)

ALLING (*rises and walks fiercely back and forth. Finally stops, center stage, facing her*). I have been a brute! I had no right. It was cowardly. If I couldn't win in a fair field, I didn't *deserve* to win. I always had a contempt for the fellow that gave an under-hand blow, and now I—I tell you honestly, Antonia Wayne, that I have no use for Raymond Alling. And the Lorelei will put about, and run for Bar Harbor, as soon as this beastly wind blows over. Meanwhile——

ANTONIA (*coolly*). Meanwhile——?

ALLING. I will relieve you of my presence, and send the steward with your dinner. (*Going* R.)

ANTONIA (*demurely*). Do I dine alone?

ALLING (*turning back*). I thought you would prefer it.

ANTONIA. I would prefer dining with my host—and the "parson chap."

ALLING. Oh, all right! The parson'll be a good buffer. He doesn't know anything.

ANTONIA (*looking down but smiling slightly*). And if you don't mind, that is, if the steward doesn't mind, I'd like time to dress before dinner—and I would prefer you to dress too.

ALLING. Oh, hang it! (*Checking himself*) Why, yes, certainly, if you prefer it, but on a yacht, you know it's not "de rigeur."

ANTONIA (*looking him full in the face for the first time, and smiling mischievously*). But you have a suit, you know, "ordered specially for the occasion."

ALLING (*striding to her, and catching her hands*). Tony!

ANTONIA (*a little breathlessly*). Yes?

ALLING. *What* are *you* going to wear?

ANTONIA. I think—(*Pause*) a soft white silk.

ALLING (*catching her in his arms*). Tony—Tony!

ANTONIA (*putting her arms about his neck*). You see, Ray, you had made it impossible for me to go back to Peyton Churchill.

ALLING. And you forgive my beastly trick? (ANTONIA *laughs softly*) Tony, take off that ring!

ANTONIA (*drawing ring from her finger*). Arbitrary. But then you always were, you know. (*Lays ring on table*)

ALLING (*taking ring-box from pocket and opening it, then putting it back*). Wrong one! Parson has to interfere with that one. (*Takes out and opens another, takes ring from it and puts it on* ANTONIA'S *finger*) I always meant to put this on again some day. We'll send the other back from the Mediterranean.

ANTONIA (*smiling at him*). Since I am under sailing orders.

QUICK CURTAIN.

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